<u>**Amendments to the Claims:**</u>

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

<u>**Listing of Claims:**</u>

1. (Previously presented) A method of processing data in a data file, the method comprising the steps of:

operating a processing system to apply to the data file a first set of rules that include generating a representation of an RDF graph for the data and ordering the representation, wherein the RDF graph contains a plurality of blank nodes and applying the first set of rules further includes assigning different respective labels to blank nodes that can be distinguished based on a limited examination of the RDF graph around each of the blank nodes, the labels making each of the labeled blank nodes distinguishable from the other blank nodes by their respective connected features of the RDF graph;

operating the processing system to apply a second set of rules that operates to modify the representation of the RDF graph in respect of blank nodes that are not distinguished by the limited examination of the RDF graph; and

operating the processing system to apply a third set of rules that includes reordering the representation to produce a canonical representation based on the RDF graph.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the first and third

sets of rules are the same.

3. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the modification in accordance with the second set of rules modifies the data.

4. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3 wherein the first and third set of rules reorder the data, but do not otherwise modify the data.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the data file is a text file describing the RDF graph.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3 wherein the modifications include deletion of deterministic data.

9. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3 wherein the modifications include addition of deterministic data.

10. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein the

deterministic data added is distinguishable from data which is, prior to performance of any modifications, deterministic.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the data describes an ontology.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step, subsequent to applying the third set of rules, of writing or verifying a digital signature establishing authenticity of the data.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein reapplying the method of claim 1 to data processed in accordance with such a method does not result in any further modification of the data.

15 through 18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) A computer program comprising program instructions embodied on a computer readable medium that, when loaded onto a computer, cause the computer to process data by:

applying to the data in a data file a first set of rules that include generating a representation of an RDF graph for the data file and ordering the representation,

wherein the RDF graph contains a plurality of blank nodes, and applying the first set of rules further includes assigning different respective labels to blank nodes that can be distinguished based on a limited examination of the RDF graph around each of the blank nodes, the labels making each of the labeled blank nodes distinguishable from the other blank nodes by their respective connected features of the RDF graph;

applying a second set of rules that operates to modify blank nodes that are not distinguishable by the limited examination of the RDF graph; and

applying a third set of rules that include reordering the representation, the reordered representation comprising a canonical representation based on the RDF graph.

20 through 27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the modification of the unlabelled blank nodes comprises deleting said blank nodes.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the modification of the unlabelled blank nodes comprises adding data to said representation such that the remaining unlabelled blank nodes can be labeled and labeling said blank nodes accordingly.

30. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the

representation is an N-Triple document and the ordering is in a lexicographic ordering.

31 through 35. (Cancelled)